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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 ROME 001908

SIPDIS

AIDAC

FROM U.S. MISSION IN ROME

STATE FOR IO A/S HOLMES, IO/EDA WINNICK AND KOTOK
USAID FOR AA/EGAT SIMMONS, AA/DCHA WINTER
UNCLASSIFIED

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USDA/FAS LYNN REICH AND DICK HUGHES
PARIS FOR UNESCO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [AORC](#) [FAO](#) [AORC](#) [FAO](#) [AORC](#) [FAO](#)

SUBJECT: FAO'S FOCUS ON HIV/AIDS

SUMMARY

1. THE UN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO) BRIEFED PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES APRIL 29, 2003 ON THE HIV/AIDS CRISIS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND FAO'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE. THE MESSAGE: HIV/AIDS IN AFRICA NEEDS TO BE ADDRESSED THROUGH A MULTI-SECTORAL APPROACH. ONE-THIRD OF THE AGRICULTURAL LABOR POPULATION IN AFRICA'S HARDEST HIT COUNTRIES WILL PROBABLY BE DEAD IN FIVE YEARS; BETTER NUTRITION COULD HELP EXTEND LIVES; GREATER HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY COULD ALLEVIATE THE NEED TO ENGAGE IN RISKY SURVIVAL STRATEGIES SUCH AS PROSTITUTION. PER FAO: MORE RESOURCES ARE NEEDED. MISSION WELCOMES FAO'S INCREASED INVOLVEMENT IN THIS ISSUE. FAO IS WELL POSITIONED TO ESTABLISH STANDARD INDICATORS AND METHODS FOR INCORPORATING HIV/AIDS INTO FOOD SECURITY, CROP AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS. UNDOUBTEDLY, MORE AND BETTER ESTIMATES OF THE MACROECONOMIC EFFECTS OF AIDS ON A GIVEN COUNTRY'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR ARE NEEDED TO FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS INCREASINGLY DEVASTATING ECONOMIC IMPACT. END SUMMARY.

2. FAO STAFF MEMBERS FROM THE POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT
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SERVICE, THE HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY SERVICE, AND THE EMERGENCY DIVISION BRIEFED ROME PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVES APRIL 29 ON THE HIV/AIDS CRISIS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, AND FAO'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE ISSUE. ACCORDING TO THE FAO TEAM, "ALL FAO TECHNICAL DEPARTMENTS ARE WORKING IN SOME SENSE ON THIS ISSUE; AND IT AFFECTS ALL COUNTRIES THAT FAO WORKS IN." THE BRIEFING FOCUSED ON SOUTHERN AFRICA BECAUSE OF AIDS SEVERE PREVALENCE IN THAT REGION AND ITS AFFECT ON HEALTH, SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND AGRICULTURE. IT WAS NOTED THAT IN A REGION WHERE SOME 80 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION DEPENDS ON AGRICULTURE, SOME COUNTRIES ALREADY HAD AN INFECTION RATE OF 39 PERCENT. FAO DIRECTOR OF POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT, MARCELA VILLAREAL COMMENTED: "WE THOUGHT BEFORE THAT THERE WOULD BE SOME [NATURAL] LIMIT TO THE INFECTION RATE; NOW, WE DON'T KNOW WHERE IT WILL STOP."

WHY FAO?

3. THE FAO PRESENTATION EMPHASIZED THE LINK BETWEEN HIV/AIDS AND FOOD SECURITY. AT THE INDIVIDUAL AND HOUSEHOLD LEVEL, INFECTION REDUCES THE CAPACITY TO PRODUCE FOOD; HOUSEHOLD RESOURCES ARE SOLD OFF TO BUY FOOD; CHILDREN ARE TAKEN OUT OF SCHOOL TO WORK. AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL, THE PANDEMIC UNDERMINES THE TRANSMISSION OF AGRICULTURAL KNOW-HOW BETWEEN GENERATIONS; EFFECTIVE FARMING TECHNIQUES ARE LOST. AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL, EXTENSION WORKERS ARE DYING, PRODUCTION SYSTEMS CHANGING, WITH FEWER WORKERS, A MORE NARROW RANGE OF CROPS ARE BEING GROWN, REDUCING GENETIC DIVERSITY. AS AIDS STRIKES DURING PRODUCTIVE YEARS, THE
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IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL LABOR IS SEVERE - FAO CALCULATES THAT THE NINE HARDEST HIT AFRICAN COUNTRIES MIGHT LOSE UP TO A FOURTH OF THEIR AGRICULTURAL LABOR BY 2020. HOWEVER, IT IS NOTED THAT THE RATE IS HIGHLY UNEVEN BETWEEN COUNTRIES. FOR EXAMPLE, IN UGANDA, THE CURRENT MORTALITY RATE IS EXPECTED TO REMAIN STABLE; IN NAMIBIA AND MOZAMBIQUE, THE MORTALITY RATE IS EXPECTED TO "SOAR."

4. THE FAO STATED THAT THE IMPLICATIONS FOR AGRICULTURE WERE ALREADY TO BE SEEN - LESS LAND CULTIVATED, A SHIFT TO LESS LABOR INTENSIVE CROPS, CULTIVATION OF A NARROWER RANGE OF CROPS, AN INCREASE IN THE COST OF HIRED LABOR, MORE DEFAULTING ON LOANS, DEFLATED LAND PRICES, LOWER

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY, INCREASED FOOD INSECURITY, AND
HIGHER MALNUTRITION RATES.

HIV/AIDS AND FOOD INSECURITY: A "DEADLY CYCLE"

15. THE FAO PRESENTATION SET OUT A "DEADLY CYCLE": HOUSEHOLD

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ACTION AID-00

INFO	LOG-00	AF-00	EVG-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	USNW-00	DODE-00
	WHA-00	SRPP-00	MEDE-00	EAP-00	EB-00	EUR-00	OIGO-00
	UTED-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	M-00	DCP-01	NSAE-00
	OES-00	OIC-02	DHS-00	PER-00	IRM-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00
	SAS-00	/003W					

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R 051423Z MAY 03
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9655
INFO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE
USDA FAS WASHDC 2659
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USMISSION GENEVA
SADC COLLECTIVE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA
USEU BRUSSELS 3205

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SUBJECT: FAO'S FOCUS ON HIV/AIDS

POVERTY AND INABILITY OF THE PRIMARY INCOME-EARNER TO SUPPLY
FOOD LEADS TO HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS ENGAGING IN "RISKY SURVIVAL
ACTIVITIES," SUCH AS PROSTITUTION, OR MIGRATION TO URBAN
AREAS WITH HIGH INFECTION RATES; ONCE INFECTED, MALNUTRITION
LEADS TO A FASTER PROGRESSION TO AIDS. HOWEVER, THEY ARGUE,
IF INTERVENTIONS ARE MADE TO REDUCE FOOD INSECURITY AND
IMPROVE NUTRITION, LIFE SPANS WOULD BE LENGTHENED SOMEWHAT
BY SLOWER PROGRESSION OF THE DISEASE; HOPEFULLY INFECTION
RATES WOULD BE INFLUENCED BY A DECLINE IN "RISKY SURVIVAL
ACTIVITIES" AND LESS ECONOMIC MIGRATION.

16. THE FAO PRESENTERS STATED THAT HERETOFORE THE GLOBAL
RESPONSE HAS BEEN PRIMARILY HEALTH-CARE BASED, WITH HEALTH
LEADING THE MULTI-SECTORAL STRATEGIES. HOWEVER, A MEDICINE
BASED-SOLUTION WAS "FAR FROM REALISTIC IN AFRICA,"
PARTICULARLY GIVEN THE NEED FOR FOOD AND CLEAN WATER TO EVEN
TAKE THE PRESCRIBED MEDICINE.

A NEW AGRICULTURAL PARADIGM NEEDED

17. FAO HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY OFFICER FLORENCE EGAL STATED
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THAT PREVIOUS AGRICULTURAL POLICIES COULD NOT CONTINUE: AN
AGRICULTURE STRATEGY WHICH FOCUSED ON HEAVY EQUIPMENT, WAS
NOT SUITABLE; DIFFERENT KINDS OF LABOR-SAVING DEVICES NEEDED
TO BE FOUND TO HELP WOMEN WEAKENED BY INFECTION; NATIONAL
AND COMMUNITY LAWS AND CUSTOMS NEEDED TO BE EXAMINED TO
ENSURE THAT WOMEN HAVE THE RIGHT TO INHERIT LAND AND OTHER
ECONOMIC ASSETS. ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE
SYSTEMS, INCLUDING EXTENSION, RESEARCH AND AGRICULTURAL
COLLEGES NEEDED TO BE REEXAMINED.

WHAT HAS FAO DONE TO DATE?

18. ACCORDING TO THE PRESENTATION, FAO'S WORK HAS PRIMARILY BEEN ADVOCACY, AWARENESS-RAISING AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION. FAO STAFF MEMBERS EMPHASIZED THAT THE HEALTH SIDE FOCUS PERTAINED TO WHO, AND FAO WORK DID NOT OVERLAP. FAO HAS PUBLISHED RESEARCH SINCE 1988 ON THE IMPACT OF HIV/AIDS ON FOOD SECURITY AND AGRICULTURE; PROVIDED TRAINING AND INFORMATION MATERIALS ON ISSUES SUCH AS LAND TENANCY AND LAND OWNERSHIP; PROVIDED ASSISTANCE TO AGRICULTURAL MINISTRIES ON MITIGATION, PREVENTION. INTERNALLY FAO HAS ATTEMPTED TO ENSURE THAT THE ISSUE IS "MAINSTREAMED" IN ALL DIVISIONS (IT WAS NOTED THAT THE 2001 COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY AND THE 2002 FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE IN AFRICA PROVIDED A MANDATE FOR THE FAO TO FOCUS SPECIAL ATTENTION ON HIV/AIDS). FAO RECENTLY PUBLISHED A PAMPHLET ON ENSURING GOOD NUTRITION FOR HIV/AIDS SUFFERERS, SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED FOR LOW-INCOME RURAL FAMILIES.

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19. AS FAR AS FIELD ACTIVITIES, THE PRESENTATION MENTIONED AN HIV/AIDS COMPONENT IN THE SPECIAL PROGRAMS FOR FOOD SECURITY IN MOZAMBIQUE AND KENYA, POLICY ADVICE ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY AND NUTRITION IN MOZAMBIQUE AND ZAMBIA AND WORK ON GENDER EQUALITY ISSUES IN NAMIBIA, UGANDA AND ZAMBIA. IT WAS NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT FAO RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THESE INTERVENTIONS WERE VERY SMALL.

MORE RESOURCES, PLEASE

110. RICHARD CHINA OF FAO'S EMERGENCY UNIT ACKNOWLEDGED THAT DONORS HAVE BEEN VERY GENEROUS IN RESPONDING TO THE CURRENT FOOD EMERGENCY IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, BUT REGRETTED THAT RESOURCES ARE NOT FORTHCOMING FOR THE CONTINUING PROBLEM OF THE 15 MILLION LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS. MR. CHINA STATED (INCORRECTLY) THAT WORLD FOOD PROGRAM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JIM MORRIS HAD NOT BEEN ABLE TO GAIN EXECUTIVE BOARD (EB) ASSENT TO DECLARING HIV/AIDS A JUSTIFICATION FOR A CONTINUING FOOD EMERGENCY. (COMMENT: THE APPROVED EB RECOMMENDATION LANGUAGE WAS: "WHEN HIV/AIDS THREATENS FOOD SECURITY AND

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ACTION AID-00

INFO	LOG-00	AF-00	EVG-00	CIAE-00	INL-00	USNW-00	DODE-00
	WHA-00	SRPP-00	EAP-00	EB-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	TEDE-00
	INR-00	IO-00	M-00	NSAE-00	OES-00	OIC-02	DHS-00
	PER-00	TEST-00	TRSE-00	SAS-00	/002W		

-----5FC3DD 051429Z /38

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USEU BRUSSELS 3206

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INFLUENCES MORTALITY, WFP WILL CONSIDER HIV/AIDS AS A BASIC COMPONENT OF A PROTRACTED RELIEF AND RECOVERY OPERATION (PRRO), CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT WFP POLICY ON PRROS." WHAT CHINA MAY BE RECALLING IS THE TRUE FACT THAT THERE WAS UNEASE EXPRESSED BY SOME DONORS REGARDING THIS APPROVED RECOMMENDATION. END COMMENT.)

11. QUESTIONS FROM THE AUDIENCE NOTED THE NEED TO ENSURE THAT "ALL FAO PROJECTS HAVE AN HIV/AIDS CHAPTER" (CAMEROON); SPOKE OF THE NEED TO "ATTACK THE ATTITUDE SITUATION" AND MOVE BEYOND THE "SECRECY ABOUT THE SITUATION" WHERE DEATHS ARE REPORTED FROM TUBERCULOSIS, OR "WITCHCRAFT" INSTEAD OF AIDS (KENYA). MAURITANIA ARGUED THAT HIV/AIDS SHOULD BE THE FOCUS OF THE UPCOMING COMMITTEE ON WORLD FOOD SECURITY. NEW FAO ASSISTANT DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR WORLD FOOD SUMMIT FOLLOW-UP, EVA CLAYTON (AMCIT) DESCRIBED THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY IN THE UNITED STATES CONCERNING FUNDING FOR PRESIDENT BUSH'S PROPOSED USD 15 BILLION FOR HIV/AIDS.

COMMENT

12. MISSION WELCOMES FAO'S INCREASED INVOLVEMENT IN THIS
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ISSUE AND EFFORTS TO INCREASE AWARENESS WITH MEMBER COUNTRIES. WHILE CONSIDERABLE ATTENTION IS NOW GIVEN TO HIV/AIDS (PARTICULARLY IN AFRICA) IN FAO MEETINGS, REGRETTABLY, THIS IS A FAIRLY RECENT PHENOMENON (THE FAO REGIONAL CONFERENCE FOR AFRICA IN CAMEROON IN 1999 DID NOT EVEN MENTION HIV/AIDS). MISSION RECOGNIZES THAT FAO DOES NOT RANK CONSISTENTLY HIGH AS A PROVIDER OF POLICY ADVICE TO GOVERNMENTS AND MINISTRIES OF AGRICULTURE (SITUATIONS MAY VARY ACCORDING TO COUNTRY, AND THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE LOCAL FAO OFFICE). BUT FAO IS WELL POSITIONED TO ESTABLISH STANDARD INDICATORS AND METHODS FOR INCORPORATING HIV/AIDS INTO FOOD SECURITY, CROP AND VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENTS. UNDOUBTEDLY, MORE AND BETTER ESTIMATES OF THE MACROECONOMIC EFFECTS OF AIDS ON A GIVEN COUNTRY'S AGRICULTURAL SECTOR ARE NEEDED TO FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS INCREASINGLY DEVASTATING ECONOMIC IMPACT. HALL

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